

Rear Detachments: Capturing and Resourcing How The Army Fights

by

Colonel Chuck Hensley
United States Army



United States Army War College
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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

REAR DETACHMENTS: CAPTURING AND RESOURCING HOW THE ARMY FIGHTS

by

Colonel Chuck Hensley
United States Army

Colonel David Dworak
Project Adviser

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U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

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Battalion and brigade rear detachments provide an important command and control function for deployed units, but Army doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel manning, and facilities (DOTMLPF) for rear detachments may not accurately reflect the way in which the Army fights. After conducting a DOTMLPF analysis, the author recommends updating Army doctrine to reflect the current rear detachment mission and organization, as well as recommending that the Army establish a small Tables of Distribution and Allowances (TDA) for rear detachments to improve collective training and mission execution.

REAR DETACHMENTS: CAPTURING AND RESOURCING HOW THE ARMY FIGHTS

When an Army brigade or battalion size unit deploys, the unit's commander relies on an un-resourced, ad-hoc organization to maintain the important connection among the unit's home installation, the unit's family members, and the deployed unit: the rear detachment. Given the family oriented mission of the rear detachment, one would expect the Army to prioritize the manning and training of this organization. But in practice, the rear detachment is organized without tables of distribution and allowances (TDA), does not have substantive doctrine to guide its formation and operation, and generally organizes late in the ARFORGEN cycle which prevents the rear detachment from conducting effective collective training. Based on one of the Army Family Covenant's themes that the strength of Soldiers is their families¹, an organization that provides a significant connection between families and their Soldiers would apparently be fairly important, but the current lack of doctrinal standards, the lack of a standard organizational structure, or a resourced personnel manning plan for rear detachments indicates otherwise.

Despite the inconsistencies noted above, every deploying brigade and battalion will form, train, and employ a rear detachment in support of deployed operations and, more importantly, any commander who tried to deploy without forming a rear detachment would most likely find themselves no longer in command. Clearly, rear detachments are, in practice, very important. Given this importance, how should today's Army implement policy to formally capture how these critical organizations are manned, trained, and employed? This question is particularly pertinent and relevant in the current environment of strategic mission refinement as the Army is looking to reduce

force structure and restructure the remaining units. With potential changes in how brigade combat teams (BCTs) are organized, there may develop a window of opportunity to make some changes in force structure and codify important lessons learned about rear detachments from the past twenty years of Army operations.

The significance of rear detachments, the emphasis placed on rear detachments by leaders at all echelons, and the value of the rear detachment to its Soldiers and their families is not a new discovery for the Army of the 21st Century. Since 1990, and before, when the Army deployed in support of OPERATIONS DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM Army units have formed and operated rear detachments. Although the Army had used rear detachments previously for mission and training deployments, the changed demographic of the Army made the formation of rear detachments a very important factor for the units that deployed to Southwest Asia, as more Soldiers were married and had children than in any previous conflict.² Formation of these rear detachments, selection of the rear detachment leaders, and maintaining the rear detachment mission during the six to nine months of deployment challenged company and field grade leaders at the battalion and brigade level.³ One of the major initial challenges leaders encountered was the lack of formal guidance about rear detachments.

In 1992, Army Major Deborah R. Godwin wrote a thesis entitled “The Mission, Organization, and Functions of the US Army Rear Detachments and the Need for Doctrine.” MAJ Godwin’s conclusion about the Army’s guidance for rear detachments was that, “Rear Detachments have no doctrine but raised an Armywide (sic) systemic issue that requires real responses in terms of manpower, material (sic), money and

time.”⁴ The following year, LTC Edward L. Dyer wrote in his 1993 monograph about rear detachment operations and family support group activities during his battalion’s deployment to Southwest Asia about his efforts to find formal guidance about rear detachments. Dyer found a similar situation to MAJ Godwin: “as far as I have been able to determine, there is no written guidance, and none was available in the command.”⁵

Moving forward in time, the importance of and challenges associated with rear detachments remained. As part of the after action review process for operations in Bosnia, the U.S. Army War College undertook a personal experience monograph collection study. The following is one of the conclusions made by the editor:

We have a married Army. A major consequence is that the most important position in a deploying unit, after the commander (and arguably after the operations/ plans officer), is the Rear Detachment Commander. Captain Basil H. Liddell-Hart was correct in noting that “even the bonds of patriotism, discipline, and comradeship are loosened when the family itself is threatened.” The state of morale on the home front underpins that on the operational front.⁶

Even over the past ten years of conflict, the topic of rear detachments is one that is common to Army professional journals as leaders at company, battalion, and brigade struggle with meeting the challenges created in forming rear detachments while simultaneously preparing Soldiers, units, and families for deployment.⁷

Other than lessons learned and the capturing of organizational knowledge through after action reviews and handbooks, not much has changed in terms of meeting the doctrinal shortcomings identified by Godwin and Dyer. This paper will examine how the Army has done in developing rear detachment guidance for company and field grade leaders in the twenty years since LTC Dyer and MAJ Godwin made their observations, determine whether that guidance is adequate to today’s requirements, and make recommendations based on that assessment.

The focus for this paper will be at the brigade, battalion, and company level in the active component of the U.S. Army. The manner in which corps and divisions deploy and utilize rear detachments is significantly different because of the role of general officers and their staffs in the command of installations. To facilitate the deployment of divisions and corps, the U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) established Mission Support Elements (MSE) at installations in the continental United States (CONUS). The development, employment, and efficiencies of the FORSCOM MSE would be another potential topic in regards to rear detachments, but one that is not considered in this paper.

Methodology and Analysis.

MAJ Godwin's methodology for her analysis was to use the five domains identified in U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Regulation 11-15: Doctrine, Training, Organization, Materiel, and Leader Development.⁸ Based on that analysis, MAJ Godwin made recommendations for a standing mission, an optimal organization, a manual to capture the functions of the rear detachment staff, and two courses of action for manning rear detachments: a modular approach or to use reserve component personnel.⁹ This paper will use the framework of MAJ Godwin's paper, but expand the areas from the five TRADOC functions of 1992 to use the seven areas of the doctrine, organizations, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF) framework found in the joint and Army capabilities doctrine. Field Manual (FM) 1-0 describes the importance of purpose of the DOTMLPF construct as follows:

Adaptive and determined leadership, innovative concept development and experimentation, and lessons learned from recent operations produce corresponding changes to doctrine, organizations, training, materiel,

leadership and education, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF). DOTMLPF is a problem-solving construct for assessing current capabilities and managing change. Change is achieved through a continuous cycle of adaptive innovation, experimentation, and experience. Change deliberately executed across DOTMLPF elements enables the Army to improve its capabilities to provide dominant landpower to the joint force.¹⁰

The analysis that follows will initially provide a baseline for the DOTMLPF terms either from joint/army doctrine or from Army Regulation (AR) 5-22, *The Army Force Modernization Process*.¹¹ From that baseline, the analysis will look to determine whether that aspect of the DOTMLPF construct is relevant to rear detachments and, if it is relevant, then provide an assessment of the adequacy of that aspect of the construct as it applies to rear detachments.

Doctrine. Army FM 1-02, *Operational Terms and Graphics*, defines doctrine as “fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgment in application.”¹² Neither of the Army’s two capstone manuals (FM 1-0, *The Army*, and FM 3-0, *Operations*) provides any guidance to subordinate elements for rear detachments. However, Field Manual 7-15, *The Army Universal Task List*, provides some guidance on rear detachment activities in Article 1.1.4, Conduct Rear Detachment Activities. In accordance with the administrative section of the field manual the article describes the task, provides measures of performance, lists a single reference for each task after the task definition and provides an abbreviation for the task proponent after the manual reference.¹³ Additionally, the identified proponent (as identified by AR 5-22) is responsible for developing the training and evaluation outlines for each task.¹⁴

The task description and measures of performance for rear detachment activities from FM 7-15 are depicted below. Highlighted in bold are the source manual reference and the proponent for rear detachment activities:

1-13. Rear detachment activities use non-deployable and other personnel to maintain facilities and equipment at home station when the deployed force is expected to return. Such activities include supporting families of deployed personnel. This task includes turning over residual equipment, supplies, and facilities to appropriate authorities (for example, the mobilization station commander) if the unit does not return to the mobilization station. **(FM 1-0) (USAAGS)**¹⁵

No	Scale	Measure
01	Yes/No	Unit family members continued to receive authorized support, assistance, and counseling during operational deployments of Soldiers.
02	Yes/No	Rear Detachment maintained and accounted for unit installation property and equipment throughout the unit's deployment.
03	Yes/No	Rear Detachment established rear detachment program before beginning deployment activities.
04	Yes/No	Environmental considerations associated with departing units have been identified and appropriate actions taken.
05	Time	To turn over residual equipment, supplies, and facilities to appropriate authorities when the unit will not return to home or mobilization station.
06	Time	To conduct rear detachment administrative and logistic activities.
07	Time	To establish a functioning family support group.
08	Time	To provide quality and meaningful assistance to unit family members during times of need and support.
09	Percent	Of rear detachment administrative and logistic reports submitted on time.
10	Percent	Of residual equipment, supplies, and facilities turned over to appropriate authorities when unit returns to home or mobilization station.

Table 1. Rear Detachment Activities Tasks¹⁶

Based on the citation of Article 1.1.4 and the administrative instructions, FM 1-0 is the manual referenced for rear detachment operations and the US Army Adjutant General School (USAAGS) is the proponent for rear detachment activities. However, as previously noted, rear detachments are not discussed in FM 1-0 and AR 5-22 does not list a designated area for rear detachments, nor is the USAAGS listed as proponent for any functional areas in AR 5-22.

An analysis of the task description and task list leads to the conclusion that the doctrinal guidance for units is to organize a rear detachment (tasks 03, 06, 09), to maintain facilities and equipment (tasks 02, 04, 05, 10), and to support the families of deployed personnel¹⁷ (tasks 01, 07, 08).¹⁸ Although neither of the capstone manuals

addresses the doctrinal mission for rear detachments, the Department of the Army through the Army, Family, and Morale Welfare and Recreation Command, has published the *US Army Rear Detachment Commander's Handbook*, 3rd edition. The rear detachment mission found in that handbook is a page long, but here are some highlights:

...Upon deployment the rear detachment commander (RDC) assumes the duties of the unit commander and maintains regular contact with the unit commander at the deployed mission site.... The RDC is responsible for the administrative operations of the rear detachment, including maintaining command and control, accounting for unit property and equipment, and managing personnel.... One of the most important rear detachment duties, however, is serving as a vital communications link between the deployed unit and family members....to help families solve their problems at the lowest level.¹⁹

Although longer than the mission found in FM 7-15, the handbook provides similar guideposts to units about the organizing of and mission for rear detachments. The intended audience for the handbook is for Soldiers selected to serve as rear detachment commanders vice a standard for the Army that establishes a doctrinal role and mission for rear detachments. Although the handbook provides useful information to rear detachment commanders, the handbook should supplement doctrine, not substitute for it.

In addition to FM 7-15 and the *Commander's Handbook*, several Army regulations provide information that shapes the role and mission of the rear detachment. First among these is AR 600-20, *Army Command Policy*, which directs commanders to support the Total Army Family Program which includes the establishment and use of FRGs.²⁰ The second regulation is AR 608-1, *Army Community Service Center*, which describes the interaction of the rear detachment with the installation and the FRG in regards to the family support mission:

Preplanning for Family assistance will ensure that a comprehensive, realistic, effective and coordinated assistance delivery system is in place prior to military operations. This system will normally include the triad of Family assistance centers, unit FRG, and unit rear detachments.²¹

AR 608-1 further describes the role of the rear detachment commander:

The rear detachment commander is the unit commander's representative at home station while the unit is deployed and is the FRG link to the deployed unit. All logistic support for FRG (for example, meeting rooms, nontactical vehicle use, office equipment and computers, newsletters, telephones, and volunteer support) is authorized by the rear detachment commander during deployment.²²

The two regulations, coupled with FM 7-15, establish family support as one of the missions for the rear detachment. Although this mission is not clearly described in doctrine, current unit rear detachment operations clearly demonstrate an understanding of the need for and the mission of rear detachments in regards to family support.

Organization. AR 5-22 defines organization as:

An organization is a unit or element with varied functions enabled by a structure through which individuals cooperate systematically to accomplish a common mission and directly provide or support warfighting capabilities. Subordinate units/elements coordinate with other units/elements and, as a whole, enable the higher-level unit/element to accomplish its mission. This includes the manpower (military, civilian, and contractor support) required to operate, sustain, and reconstitute warfighting capabilities.²³

Based on the research of the Army field manuals, there is no guidance on organizing rear detachments other than the tasks from FM 7-15. As doctrine and the mission drive organizational structure, this is not surprising, but the definition above provides the framework for understanding rear detachments: Rear detachments enable the parent unit to accomplish its deployed mission. Although doctrine does not provide an answer to how to organize a rear detachment, twenty years of Army unit deployments provides several examples of how different units have organized and those examples are fairly consistent from 1991 onward.

MAJ Godwin recommended a task organization based on the following mission:

Provide family support; provide combat service support to deployed forces to include personnel services; provide property accountability of Army and Soldiers' personal property; provide support to the installation, to include mobilization support; provide redeployment; and transition operations.²⁴

Although the mission for today's rear detachments does not include the combat service support or support to the installation, the three basic missions of family, property, and administration described in the doctrine analysis are found in this mission statement. Based on that mission and consolidating the rear detachment at the brigade level MAJ Godwin's rear detachment organization looked as follows:

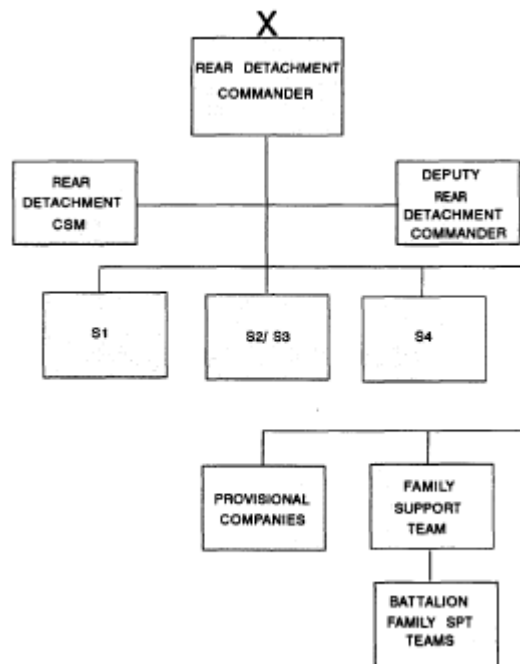


Figure 1. Godwin Rear Detachment Organization²⁵

MAJ Godwin's organization is very similar to what is currently found in the Rear Detachment Commander's Handbook.

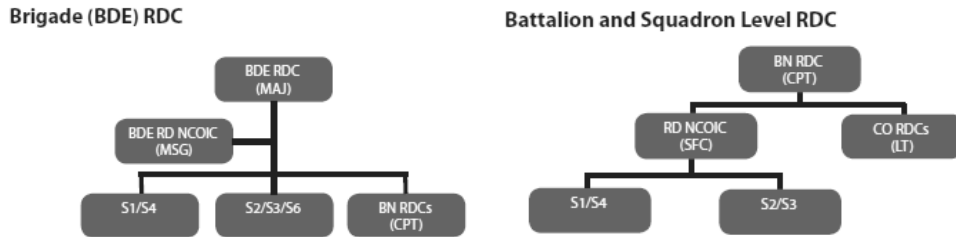


Figure 2. Rear Detachment Handbook Rear Detachment Organizations²⁶

In the lessons learned and articles researched, leaders come to similar conclusions about how to organize rear detachments and the rear detachment organization is based on the mission outlined in FM 7-15: maintain contact with the deployed unit, provide administrative support to Soldiers in the rear detachment, provide support to the Soldier's families through the Family Readiness Groups (FRG), and maintain accountability of equipment that did not deploy with the unit.²⁷ The literature leads to the conclusion that there is a common understanding of how rear detachments should organize to meet the mission and this common understanding should drive any update to current doctrine. The two major challenges with the organization are in how to, and with whom to, staff the rear detachments. The paper will address this personnel issue in follow-on analysis.

Training. AR 5-22 defines training as “the instruction of personnel to increase their capacity to perform specific military functions and associated individual and collective tasks.”²⁸ Training considerations for rear detachments consists of individual training for the members of the organizational rear detachment and collective training for the rear detachment as a cohesive unit. Generally, individuals assigned to the rear detachment have the necessary technical skills to perform their staff function, or the technical skills are simple enough to learn; the one exception, normally, is the rear

detachment commander. The one Army institutional training aide available to rear detachment commanders, at all levels, is the Army Community Service Rear Detachment Commander Computer Based Training Module.²⁹ Additionally, most installations provide training for rear detachment commanders at the Soldiers installation.³⁰ Based on research, there is not a requirement to increase individual technical training in support of rear detachments.

The larger issue in regards to training rear detachments is how and when to conduct collective training. Of the eleven training principles outlined in FM 7-0, *Training Units and Developing Leaders for Full Spectrum Operations*, the ones that most apply to rear detachment training are: train as you will fight, train while operating, and conduct multi-echelon and concurrent training.³¹ The Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) process makes the application of these three principles challenging for unit leaders.

Although no single database exists that specifically addresses rear detachment training, multiple unit After Action Reviews (AARs) and unit lesson learned articles identify the challenges associated with training rear detachments.³² Specifically during the reset stage, units are not fully manned and are primarily focused on equipment. During the train/ready phase units are focused on individual and collective training, but the tactical training for deployment takes priority over organizing and training rear detachments. In the cases researched, units formed and assigned personnel to rear detachments prior to the units combat training center (CTC) mission rehearsal exercise (MRE) prior to deployment and used that deployment as the single training event for rear detachments. In a few cases, the rear detachment personnel, to include battalion or brigade level rear detachment commanders, changed prior to the unit's deployment.³³

Based on the training analysis, collective training for rear detachments is an area that may need improvement.

Materiel. AR 5-22 defines materiel as follows:

All items (including ships, tanks, self-propelled weapons, aircraft, and so forth, and related spares, repair parts, and support equipment but excluding real property, installations, and utilities) necessary to equip, operate, maintain, and support military activities without distinction as to its application for administrative or combat purposes.³⁴

Generally, materiel has not been an issue for tactical level rear detachment commanders or their organizations, other than maintaining accountability for the equipment that was left behind by the deploying unit. Leaders and Soldiers are familiar with the property book process of splitting apart the deployed and non-deployed equipment and materiel accountability is part of the training that installations emphasize in their rear detachment courses. Although property accountability is not an issue identified at the battalion and brigade level, materiel is an issue from the Army's perspective, specifically from a materiel readiness view. Any equipment that the deploying unit leaves behind becomes the responsibility of the rear detachment; if the quantity of equipment is significant, then the rear detachment is unable to maintain that equipment in accordance with Army standards (e.g. semiannual and annual services, Army Oil Analysis Program). In response to this manpower to materiel issue with left behind equipment (LBE) the Army developed the Army Field Support Brigade (AFSB). The AFSB, in most cases, takes responsibility for LBE accountability and maintenance. Whether or not the AFSB continues this mission for theater security training missions as the Army withdraws from Afghanistan may impact materiel readiness.³⁵

Leadership and Education. AR 5-22 explains that "leadership development is the product of a learning continuum that comprises training, experience, formal education,

and continual self-improvement.”³⁶ This aspect of the DOTMLPF construct for the rear detachment applies primarily to the rear detachment commander and, for the purpose of this analysis, the rear detachment commander at battalion and brigade level. In all cases examined, the rear detachment commander was a commissioned officer that the deploying unit commander placed on orders. For a brigade rear detachment, the rear detachment commander was a field grade officer; otherwise the unit would not have had the ability to administer the field grade authorities of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).

Officers selected for rear detachment command are products of the leadership development process through the three training domains of the institution, the unit, and the individual.³⁷ Based on the review of AARs, lessons learned, and articles written on rear detachments, the leaders selected appeared to perform no better or worse than leaders of the same rank within the organization. However, most battalion and brigade commanders emphasized that selecting the rear detachment commander was one of their most important decisions prior to the deployment. Although not specifically stated, the implication was that the leader development process provided a sufficient number of officers at battalion and brigade level who were capable of leading the rear detachment for those organizations.

In addition to the above analysis, general officers have also emphasized the importance of selecting quality leaders for rear detachments. An example of this guidance was given by General William W. Crouch, U.S. Army Europe Commander during the initial deployments to Bosnia in (year): “he insisted that deploying commanders leave high quality officers behind to command rear detachments.”³⁸

Additionally, General Crouch sought to ensure that the officers selected for rear detachment command were seen in the same light by the Army:

He [Crouch] sought agreement from the Army Chief of Staff, which he received, that subsequent promotion boards would be instructed to consider an officer's selection for rear detachment command as an acknowledgement of his high quality rather than the reverse.³⁹

Whether or not rear detachment command has helped or hindered officers for promotion is difficult to determine based on the available data, but the data does show that the Army's leader development system provided a pool capable of leaders from which to select rear detachment commanders at the brigade and battalion level.

Personnel. AR 5-22 describes personnel as "the development of manpower and personnel plans, programs, and policies necessary to man, support and sustain the Army."⁴⁰ The major challenge with rear detachments as currently executed in the U.S. Army is that the organizations are ad hoc and the burden for manning is put on the deploying unit without the support of a TDA. This aspect of rear detachment manning is further complicated by the issue of unit deployability status. General guidance for brigade combat teams has been to deploy at a minimum of 95% of authorized strength. Although unit manning has exceeded authorized strength by several percent, Soldiers who are non-deployable effect the ability of the unit to meet the deployed manning goal and manning rear detachments with deployable Soldiers further exacerbates meeting this challenge.⁴¹

Based on the current personnel manning system, deploying unit commanders must balance the selection of quality leaders and Soldiers with the requirement to meet ARFORGEN deployment manning requirements. The manning policy for deployment logically causes deploying commanders to think carefully about manning rear

detachments with leaders and Soldiers who would otherwise be deployable and creates a tension for deploying leaders when searching for the best leaders for the rear detachment.

Facilities. AR 5-22 defines real property as consisting of “one or more of the following: a building, a structure, a utility system, pavement, and underlying land.”⁴² Similar to materiel, facilities for rear detachments are not an issue that is raised in after-action reviews, other than maintaining accountability of the real property. In an expeditionary Army, where units will deploy and then redeploy to same duty station, this does not seem have the potential of becoming a systemic problem.

Summary of DOTMLPF Analysis. Based on the analysis, the aspects of DOTMLPF that do not require change are individual training, materiel, leader development and education, and facilities. The four areas that do require some change are doctrine, organization, collective training, and personnel. In terms of doctrine and organizational structure for rear detachments there is sufficient information that resides in handbooks and lessons learned documents to inform the necessary changes to current doctrinal manuals. Collective training for rear detachments is a function of the ARFORGEN cycle and current personnel manning policies. Without changes to personnel manning, collective training of rear detachments would require commanders to prioritize rear detachment training and manning earlier in the ARFORGEN cycle. The recommendation section will provide methods for updating doctrine and provide two courses of action for changing personnel manning.

Recommendations

The DOTMLPF analysis provides a framework to address the shortcomings in the aspects of doctrine, organizations, collective training, and personnel. Of these, the

most pressing need is to address the doctrinal shortcoming and then consider the options and logical outcomes in the other three areas of organization, collective training and personnel.

For the past twenty years, Army units at all echelons have organized and operated rear detachments to maintain contact with family members and provide a mission command element to coordinate among the deployed unit, installation staff, and FRGs. Rear detachments are clearly part of how the American Army fights - - either FM 1-0 or FM 3-0 should reflect this reality. FM 1-0 captures the mission of rear detachments when it states, "Army leaders will never take for granted the personal sacrifices made by Soldiers and their families. These include facing the hardships of war and extended periods of separation."⁴³ However, FM 1-0 is a broader, principled doctrine and rear detachments are more specific than for which this manual would allow.

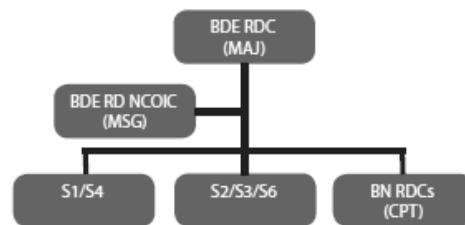
FM 3-0 is a more detailed and descriptive manual and paragraph 3-78 could be modified (as shown in bold below) to include the role of rear detachments in providing support to the family.

1-78. Campaigning requires a mindset and vision that complements expeditionary requirements. Soldiers understand that no matter how long they are deployed, the Army will take care of them and **take care of** their families **through the employment of rear detachments**. They are confident that the loyalty they pledge to their units will be returned to them, no matter what happens on the battlefield or in what condition they return home. Tactical leaders understand the effects of protracted land operations on Soldiers and adjust the tempo of operations whenever circumstances allow. Senior commanders plan effective campaigns and major operations. They provide the resources needed to sustain operations, often through the imaginative use of joint capabilities.⁴⁴

Finally, the USAAGS should update Article 1.1.4 to reflect the mission described in the analysis and make the organization described in the *U.S. Army Rear Detachment Commander's Handbook* doctrinal.⁴⁵ Recommended changes to Article 1.1.4:

1-13. Brigade and Battalion level units conduct rear detachment activities by organizing rear detachment as depicted below:

Brigade (BDE) RDC



Battalion and Squadron Level RDC

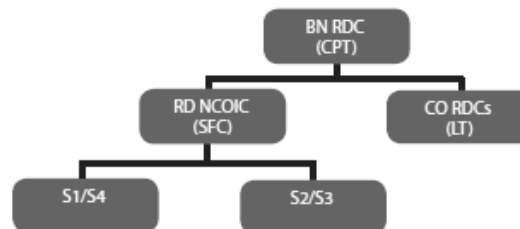


Figure 3. Recommended Organization for BDE and BN Rear Detachments

The rear detachment maintains the rear detachment organization to maintain contact with the deployed unit, to provide support to the families of deployed Soldiers, to maintain facilities and non-deploying equipment, maintain accountability of non-deployed Soldiers, and to integrate into installation activities. **(FM 3-0)** (USAAGS)⁴⁶

No	Scale	Measure
Organization Tasks		
03	Yes/No	Rear Detachment established rear detachment program before beginning deployment activities.
06	Time	To conduct rear detachment administrative and logistic activities.
09	Percent	Of rear detachment administrative and logistic reports submitted on time.
Family Support Tasks		
01	Yes/No	Unit family members continued to receive authorized support, assistance, and counseling during operational deployments of Soldiers.
07	Time	Provide required support to Family Readiness Groups
08	Time	To provide quality and meaningful assistance to unit family members during times of need and support.
Maintenance Tasks		
02	Yes/No	Rear Detachment maintained and accounted for unit installation property and equipment throughout the unit's deployment.
04	Yes/No	Environmental considerations associated with departing units have been identified and appropriate actions taken.

05	Time	To turn over residual equipment, supplies, and facilities to appropriate authorities when the unit will not return to home or mobilization station.
10	Percent	Of residual equipment, supplies, and facilities turned over to appropriate authorities when unit returns to home or mobilization station.

Table 2. Recommended Rear Detachment Activities Tasks⁴⁷

Once the doctrine is updated and the organizational structure is captured in FM 7-15, the remaining issues are the collective training of and personnel manning for rear detachments. This paper considers two options and recommends the establishment of a rear detachment TDA.

First Option – No Change. The first, and most obvious, choice is to leave the situation as it is. Despite multiple AAR comments and obvious friction, the system works and will probably continue to work. The question is whether or not changes in the Army's system for forming rear detachments would help leaders at brigade level and below address the requirements, formal and informal, of the rear detachment. The Army is better at forming and operating rear detachments than it was in 1991, but is the Army as good as it can be in establishing and operating rear detachments? If the answer is yes, then there is no requirement to change.

Not changing the personnel manning would also probably lead to no change in the collective training process for the rear detachment, although deploying unit commanders could prioritize rear detachment manning and training over other training, but this may create an unacceptable impact on mission training for the part of the unit that is deploying.

Second Option – Add Organizational TDA Structure at the Brigade and Battalion Level. In accordance with the recommended changes to FM 7-15 and as part of the Army's reorganization of BCTs, provide the rear detachment structure as either a permanent TDA or as an augmented TDA synchronized with the ARFORGEN cycle.

Either the permanent or augmented TDA would drive the collective training process. A permanent TDA would provide the commander maximum flexibility to train over the ARFORGEN cycle; an augmented TDA synchronized with the ARFORGEN cycle would provide the commander a predictable window in which to conduct the collective training. In addition to the training benefit, a TDA would provide relief from the deployable non deployable selection dilemma described in the analysis section. Soldiers assigned against the TDA would not affect the deployment numbers. Additionally, battalion and brigade commanders would be able to consider deployability secondarily to selecting the most capable leaders and Soldiers.

The major challenge with the TDA is the personnel cost for the Army. If the TDA at brigade were to have a rear detachment commander (RDC), a rear detachment NCOIC, a rear detachment S1, and a rear detachment S4, and the battalions were to have a RDC and a rear detachment NCOIC as the standing members, the personnel cost for a six battalion BCT would be 16 personnel. With the projected number of deployable BCTs and BDEs, the cost of providing this TDA to every deployable unit would most likely exceed 2,000 Soldiers, which some will equate to a lost unit of one type or another.⁴⁸ However, providing deploying units with a standing or augmented TDA provides a further commitment to families, provides flexibility to commanders in selecting rear detachment leadership, and provides a very small cadre of leaders who can focus on training rear detachments. The sooner in the ARFORGEN cycle the unit mans the TDA, the more effective the rear detachment will become at accomplishing the FRG support mission, the materiel mission, and the non-deployable Soldier accountability mission. Fundamentally, a rear detachment will not get better at tasks on

which they do not train, on which they train infrequently, or on which they train only once during a major training exercise prior to deployment. A standing TDA or an augmented TDA will allow units more time to train as they will fight and to get better at their mission.

Conclusion

AR 71-9, *Warfighting Capabilities Determination*, states that “the Army utilizes DOTMLPF in training, readiness, and accountability of current organizations, and in changing Army organizations themselves to be more mission capable and versatile.”⁴⁹ By updating Army doctrine for rear detachments and changing the manner in which rear detachments are manned, the Army will make the rear detachment more capable. Additionally, these changes will better reflect how rear detachments support the expeditionary nature of our brigade combat formations and the Army will capture one of the important principles that has guided tactical unit deployment for the past twenty years.

The rear detachment is the military element that connects the deployed unit with the family and connects the family to the support of the installation. Ineffective rear detachments place an unnecessary burden on the volunteer leaders of the FRGs as the FRG leaders then try to connect with the installation. Selecting the right officers to command and the right Soldiers to staff rear detachments is important and consistent with one of the Secretary of the Army’s Top Priorities – “Champion Soldiers, Civilians, and Families,”⁵⁰ particularly since Secretary McHugh stated, “the most important thing we do is take care of Soldiers, Civilians and Families.”⁵¹ Developing the doctrine for rear detachments and, just as importantly, providing a personnel policy for manning rear

detachments that allows commanders to collectively train those rear detachments is consistent with that priority of taking care of families.

Endnotes

¹ *Army Family Covenant, Army One Source*, <https://www.myarmyonesource.com/communitiesandmarketplace/armyfamilycovenant/default.aspx> (accessed March 21, 2012).

² US Army Research Institute for the Behavior Social Sciences, Army Personnel Survey Office, *Marital Status 1952 – 2007*, <http://www.mwrbrandcentral.com/homepage/graphics/research/maritalstatus91207.ppt> (accessed March 21, 2012)

³ Deborah R. Godwin, *The Mission, Organization, and Functions of U.S. Army Rear Detachments And The Need For Doctrine*. Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1992. Major Godwin's MMAS looked at multiple units, to include units in CONUS and USAREUR, as well as several CALL products published after Desert Shield/Storm.

⁴ Ibid., iii (Abstract).

⁵ Edward L. Dyer, *1st Battalion, 37th Armor Rear Detachment Operations and Family Support Group Activities During The Gulf War Study Project*. Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, April 15, 1993, 12-13.

⁶ Douglas V. Johnson II, ed., *Warriors in Peace Operations*, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 25 January 1999), 2.

⁷ Several company and battalion level articles reviewed, as well as one brigade level article reviewed. In each case, the author (in some cases with their spouse as co-author) were passing on lessons learned. Fred E. Manning and Carter T. Boggess, "Rear Detachment Risk Management Operations," *Engineer*, April/June, 2003; Christopher J. Toomey and Regina Fogerty-Toomey, "Building Relevant Family Readiness Groups For An Expeditionary Army", *Army*, April, 2005; J Clinton Tisserand, "Building From Scratch: One Method For Success in Structuring a Rear Detachment," *Armor*, May/June, 2007; J Clinton Tisserand, "Jump Start Rear Detachment", *Armor*, November/December, 2007; Joshua Buchanan, "Ensuring a Legacy: Battalion-Level Rear-Detachment Operations," *Army*, January, 2010; Kyle Moore and Erica Koelder, "Family Readiness in the ARFORGEN Cycle," *Engineer*, May/August 2010.

⁸ Godwin, *The Mission, Organization, and Functions of U.S. Army Rear Detachments And The Need For Doctrine*, 101.

⁹ Godwin, *The Mission, Organization, and Functions of U.S. Army Rear Detachments And The Need For Doctrine*, 133-134

¹⁰ U.S. Department of the Army, *The Army*, Field Manual 1-0, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department, 14 June 2005), 4-3 to 4-4.

¹¹ U.S. Department of the Army, *The Army Force Modernization Process*, Army Regulation 5-22 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 25 March 2011)

¹² U.S. Department of the Army, *Operational Terms and Graphics*, Field Manual 1-02, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department, 02 February 2010), 1-65.

¹³ U.S. Department of the Army, *The Army Universal Task List*, Field Manual 7-15, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department, 09 December 2011), xi.

¹⁴ Ibid., xi.

¹⁵ Ibid., 1-8.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ FSG is an older term, as opposed to the current regulatory requirement of FRG.

¹⁸ This task is disconnected from AR 600-22 which puts the establishment of the FSG on the Commander. Although the rear detachment commander is a commander, they are not the commander responsible for establishing the FRG.

¹⁹ U.S. Department of the Army, *Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command, US Army Rear Detachment Commander's Handbook*, 3rd ed. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, Family, and Morale Welfare and Recreation Command, 2006), 4-5.

²⁰ U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Command Policy*, Army Regulation 600-20 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 04 August 2011), 47-48.

²¹ U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Community Service Center*, Army Regulation 608-2 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 19 October 2007), 13.

²² Ibid., 45.

²³ U.S. Department of the Army, *The Army Force Modernization Process*, 11.

²⁴ Godwin, *The Mission, Organization, and Functions of U.S. Army Rear Detachments And The Need For Doctrine*, 127.

²⁵ Godwin, *The Mission, Organization, and Functions of U.S. Army Rear Detachments And The Need For Doctrine*, 131.

²⁶ U.S. Department of the Army, *Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command, US Army Rear Detachment Commander's Handbook*, 3rd ed., 5-6.

²⁷ In addition to the articles previously cited the Center For Army Lessons Learned, *CALL Handbook Family Readiness Group Information* No. 07-30 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Center For Army Lessons Learned, July 2007), reinforces this point. The CALL Handbook has more detail on rear detachment organizations, as well as a suggested METL. Although useful, the handbook should supplement doctrine, not serve in its absence.

²⁸ U.S. Department of the Army, *The Army Force Modernization Process*, 11.

²⁹ Available online at https://www.myarmyonesource.com/skins/aos2/display_ajax.aspx?ModuleID=a53b8c22-018c-40c9-b51f-d6a1263c9889, accessed March 21, 2012.

³⁰ Author found references on several installation websites to rear detachment commander courses, to include Fort Bragg, Fort Hood, Fort Lewis, and Fort Riley.

³¹ U.S. Department of the Army, *Training Units and Developing Leaders for Full Spectrum Operations*, Field Manual 7-0, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department, 23 February 2011), 2-1.

³² In addition to the articles previously cited, the author participated in AARs for 1st Infantry Division BCTs (1/1 HBCT, 2/1 HBCT, 3/1 HBCT and worked with rear detachments for CAB/1 ID, Support BDE/1ID, and 4/1 IBCT).

³³ Author informally interviewed ten former battalion commanders and three brigade commanders to confirm author's observation of the deployment training for four brigades while the G3 for 1 ID from 2009 to 2011. Interviews were informal and only focused on when the rear detachment formed, how did the unit train the rear detachment, and, after formation of the rear detachment, did the commander have to change out any of the rear detachment leaders.

³⁴ U.S. Department of the Army, *The Army Force Modernization Process* 11.

³⁵ U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Field Service Brigade*, Army Techniques Publication 4-91, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 15 December 2011), 1-2 and 3-1.

³⁶ U.S. Department of the Army, *The Army Force Modernization Process*, 11.

³⁷ U.S. Department of the Army, *Training Units and Developing Leaders for Full Spectrum Operations*, 2-6.

³⁸ Richard M. Swain, *Neither War Nor Not War* (Carlisle Barrack PA: The Strategic Studies Institute, May 2003), 59.

³⁹ Richard M. Swain, *Neither War Nor Not War*, 59.

⁴⁰ U.S. Department of the Army, *The Army Force Modernization Process*, Army Regulation 5-22, 11.

⁴¹ As the G3 for 1ID from 2009 to 2011, author has personal knowledge of deployment manning process and impact on that process on deploying units.

⁴² U.S. Department of the Army, *The Army Force Modernization Process*, 10.

⁴³ U.S. Department of the Army, *The Army*, 2-12.

⁴⁴ U.S. Department of the Army, *Operations*, Field Manual 3-0 change 1, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 14 June 2005), 1-16.

⁴⁵ Another source for the organization could be the CALL Handbook, No. 07-03, but the Handbook has more detail and the author felt a simpler organization would be better for use in FM 7-15.

⁴⁶ Simplified description and changed doctrinal reference to match recommended change to FM 3-0.

⁴⁷ Reorganized tasks to match missions. Updated task 07 to match current regulations (change from FSG to FRG).

⁴⁸ Rough estimate based on current force structure of 45 BCTs, 38 functional support brigades, and 45 functional brigades (129 deployable brigades x 16 = 2064). 16 is based on six battalions for each brigade and the 129 brigades is based on current force structure. With reduced force structure this number would be lower. Additionally, if the TDA were an augmented TDA based on deployment schedules, number could be 2/3 or 1/2 this number based on deployment schedules.

⁴⁹ U.S. Department of the Army, *Warfighting Capabilities Determination*, Army Regulation 71-9 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 25 March 2011), 30.

⁵⁰ Secretary of the Army, Enclosure 1 to FRAGO 64 to TCP 11-12, 2.

⁵¹ Ibid.